A

FATHER's LEGACY

TO

HIS DAUGHTERS.

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PREFACE.

THAT the ſubſequent Letters were written by a tender father, in a declining ſtate of health, for the inſtruction of his daughters, and not intended for the Public, is a circumſtance which will recommend them to every one who conſiders them in the light of admonition and advice. In ſuch domeſtic intercourſe, no ſacrifices are made to prejudices, to cuſtoms, to faſhionable opinions. Paternal love, paternal care, ſpeak their genuine ſentiments, undiſguiſed and unreſtrained. A father's zeal for his daughters improvement, in whatever can make a woman amiable, with a father's quick apprehenſion of the dangers that too often ariſe, even from the attainment of that very point, ſuggeſt his admonitions, and render him attentive to a thouſand little graces and little decorums, which would eſcape the niceſt moraliſt who ſhould undertake the ſubject on unintereſted ſpeculation. Every faculty is on the alarm, when the objects of ſuch tender affection are concerned.

In the writer of theſe Letters paternal tenderneſs and vigilance were doubled, as he was at that time ſole parent, death having before deprived the young ladies of their excellent mother. His own precarious ſtate of health inſpired him with the moſt tender ſolicitude for their future welfare; and though he might have concluded, that the impreſſion made by his inſtruction and uniform example could never be effaced from the memory of his children, yet his anxiety for their orphan condition ſuggeſted to him this method of continuing to them thoſe advantages.

The Editor is encouraged to offer this Treatiſe to the Public, by the very favourable reception which the reſt of his father's works have met with. The Comparative View of the State of Man and other Animals, and the Eſſay on the Office and Duties of a Phyſician, have been very generally read; and if he is not deceived by the partiality of his friends, he has reaſon to believe they have met with general approbation.

In ſome of thoſe tracts the Author's object was to improve the taſte and underſtanding of his reader; in others, to mend his heart; in others, to point out to him the proper uſe of philoſophy, by ſhewing its application to the duties

duties of common life. In all his writings his chief view was the good of his fellow-creatures; and as thoſe among his friends, in whoſe taſte and judgment he moſt confided, think the publication of this ſmall work will contribute to that general deſign, and at the ſame time to do honour to his memory, the Editor can no longer heſitate to comply with their advice in communicating it to the Public.

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A

FATHER's LEGACY

TO

HIS DAUGHTERS.

MY DEAR GIRLS,

YOU had the misfortune to be deprived of your mother, at a time of life when you were inſenſible of your loſs, and could receive little benefit either from her inſtruction or her example.—Before this comes to your hands, you will likewiſe have loſt your father.

I have had many melancholy reflections on the forlorn and helpleſs ſituation you muſt be in, if it ſhould pleaſe God to remove me from you, before you arrive at that period of life, when you will be able to think and act for yourſelves. I know mankind too well. I know their falſehood, their diſſipation, their coldneſs to all the duties

duties of friendſhip and humanity. I know the little attention paid to helpleſs infancy.—You will meet with few friends diſintereſted enough to do you good offices, when you are incapable of making them any return, by contributing to their intereſt or their pleaſure, or even to the gratification of their vanity.

I have been ſupported under the gloom naturally ariſing from theſe reflections, by a reliance on the goodneſs of that Providence which has hitherto preſerved you, and given me the moſt pleaſing proſpect of the goodneſs of your diſpoſitions; and by the ſecret hope that your mother's virtues will entail a bleſſing on her children.

The anxiety I have for your happineſs has made me reſolve to throw together my ſentiments relating to your future conduct in life If I live for ſome years, you will receive them with much greater advantage, ſuited to your different geniuſes and diſpoſitions. If I die ſooner, you muſt receive them in this very imperfect manner,—the laſt proof of my affection.

You will all remember your father's fondneſs, when perhaps every other circumſtance relating to him is forgotten. This remembrance, I hope, will induce you to give a ſerious attention to the advices I am now going to leave with

with you.—I can requeſt this attention with the greater confidence, as my ſentiments on the moſt intereſting points that regard life and manners, were entirely correſpondent to your mother's, whoſe judgment and taſte I truſted much more than my own.

You muſt expect that the advices which I ſhall give you will be very imperfect, as there are many nameleſs delicacies, in female manners, of which none but a woman can judge.—You will have one advantage by attending to what I am going to leave with you; you will hear, at leaſt for once in your lives, the genuine ſentiments of a man who has no intereſt in flattering or deceiving you.—I ſhall throw my reflections together without any ſtudied order, and ſhall only to avoid confuſion, range them under a few general heads.

You will ſee, in a little Treatiſe of mine juſt publiſhed, in what an honourable point of view I have conſidered your ſex; not as domeſtic drudges, or the ſlaves of our pleaſures, but as our companions and equals; as deſigned to ſoften our hearts and poliſh our manners; and, as Thomſon finely ſays,

To raiſe the virtues, animate the bliſs,
And ſweeten all the toils of human life.

I ſhall

I ſhall not repeat what I have there ſaid on this ſubject, and ſhall only obſerve, that from the view I have given of your natural character and place in ſociety, there ariſes a certain propriety of conduct peculiar to your ſex. It is this peculiar propriety of female manners of which I intend to give you my ſentiments, without touching on thoſe general rules of conduct by which men and women are equally bound.

While I explain to you that ſyſtem of conduct which I think will tend moſt to your honour and happineſs, I ſhall, at the ſame time, endeavour to point out thoſe virtues and accompliſhments which render you moſt reſpectable and moſt amiable in the eyes of my own ſex.

RELI-

RELIGION.

THOUGH the duties of religion, ſtrictly ſpeaking, are equally binding on both ſexes, yet certain differences in their natural character and education, render ſome vices in your ſex particularly odious. The natural hardneſs of our hearts, and ſtrength of our paſſions, inflamed by the uncontrouled licenſe we are too often indulged with in our youth, are apt to render our manners more diſſolute, and make us leſs ſuſceptible of the finer feelings of the heart. Your ſuperior delicacy, your modeſty, and the uſual ſeverity of your education, preſerve you, in a great meaſure, from any temptation to thoſe vices to which we are moſt ſubjected. The natural ſoftneſs and ſenſibility of your diſpoſitions particularly fit you for the practice of thoſe duties where the heart is chiefly concerned. And this, along with the natural warmth of your imaginations, renders you peculiarly ſuſceptible of the feelings of devotion.

There are many circumſtances in your ſituation that peculiarly require the ſupports of religion to enable you to act in them with ſpirit and propriety. Your whole life is often a life of ſuffering. You cannot plunge into buſineſs, or diſſipate yourſelves in pleaſure and riot, as men too often do, when under the preſſure of misfortunes. You muſt bear your ſorrows in ſilence, unknown and unpitied. You muſt often put on

on a face of ſerenity and chearfulneſs, when your hearts are torn with anguiſh, or ſinking in deſpair. Then your only reſource is in the conſolation of religion. It is chiefly owing to theſe that you bear domeſtic misfortunes better than we do.

But you are ſometimes in very different circumſtances, that equally require the reſtraints of religion. The natural vivacity, and perhaps the natural vanity of your ſex, is very apt to lead you into a diſſipated ſtate of life, that deceives you, under the appearance of innocent pleaſure; but which in reality waſtes your ſpirits, impairs your health, weakens all the ſuperior faculties of your minds, and often ſullies your reputations. Religion, by checking this diſſipation, and rage for pleaſure, enables you to draw more happineſs even from thoſe very ſources of amuſement, which, when too frequently applied to, are often productive of ſatiety and diſguſt.

Religion is rather a matter of ſentiment than reaſoning. The important and intereſting article of faith are ſufficiently plain. Fix your attention on theſe, and do not meddle with controverſy. If you get into that, you plunge into a chaos, from which you will never be able to extricate yourſelves. It ſpoils the temper, and, I ſuſpect, has no good effect on the heart.

Avoid

Avoid all books, and all converſation, that tend to ſhake your faith on thoſe great points of religion which ſhould ſerve to regulate your conduct, and on which your hopes of future and eternal happineſs depend.

Never indulge yourſelves in ridicule on religious ſubjects, nor give countenance to it in others, by ſeeming diverted with what they ſay. This, to people of good breeding, will be a ſufficient check.

I wiſh you to go no farther than the Scriptures for your religious opinions. Embrace thoſe you find clearly revealed. Never perplex yourſelves about ſuch as you do not underſtand, but treat them with ſilent and becoming reverence.—I would adviſe you to read only ſuch religious books as are addreſſed to the heart, ſuch as inſpire pious and devout affections, ſuch as are proper to direct you in your conduct, and not ſuch as tend to entangle you in the endleſs maze of opinions and ſyſtems.

Be punctual in the ſtated performance of your private devotions, morning and evening. If you have any ſenſibility or imagination, this will eſtabliſh ſuch an intercourſe between you and the Supreme Being, as will be of infinite conſequence to you in life. It will communicate an habitual chearfulneſs to your tempers, give a firmneſs and ſteadineſs to your virtue, and ena-

ble you to go through all the viciſſitudes of human life with propriety and dignity.

I wiſh you to be regular in your attendance on public worſhip, and in receiving the communion. Allow nothing to interrupt your public or private devotions, except the performance of ſome active duty in life, to which they ſhould always give place.—In your behaviour at public worſhip, obſerve an exemplary attention and gravity.

That extreme ſtrictneſs which I recommend to you in theſe duties, will be conſidered by many of your acquaintance as a ſuperſtitious attachment to forms; but in the advices I give you on this and other ſubjects, I have an eye to the ſpirit and manners of the age. There is a levity and diſſipation in the preſent manners, a coldneſs and liſtleſſneſs in whatever relates to religion, which cannot fail to infect you, unleſs you purpoſely cultivate in your minds a contrary bias, and make the devotional taſte habitual.

Avoid all grimace and oſtentation in your religious duties. They are the uſual cloaks of hypocriſy; at leaſt they ſhew a weak and vain mind.

Do not make religion a ſubject of common converſation in mixed companies. When it is introduced, rather ſeem to decline it. At the ſame

ſame time, never ſuffer any perſon to inſult you by any fooliſh ribaldry on your religious opinions, but ſhew the ſame reſentment you would naturally do on being offered any other perſonal inſult. But the ſureſt way to avoid this, is by a modeſt reſerve on the ſubject, and by uſing no freedom with others about their religious ſentiments.

Cultivate an enlarged charity for all mankind, however they may differ from you in their religious opinions. That difference may probably ariſe from cauſes in which you had no ſhare, and from which you can derive no merit.

Shew your regard to religion, by a diſtinguiſhing reſpect to all its miniſters, of whatever perſuaſion, who do not by their lives diſhonour their profeſſion; but never allow them the direction of your conſciences, leſt they taint you with the narrow ſpirit of their party.

The beſt effect of your religion will be a diffuſive humanity to all in diſtreſs.—Set apart a certain proportion of your income as ſacred to charitable purpoſes. But in this, as well as in the practice of every other duty, carefully avoid oſtentation. Vanity is always defeating her own purpoſes. Fame is one of the natural rewards of virtue. Do not purſue her, and ſhe will follow you.

Do not confine your charity to giving money. You may have many opportunities of ſhewing a tender and compaſſionate ſpirit where your money is not wanted.—There is a falſe and unnatural refinement in ſenſibility, which makes ſome people ſhun the ſight of every object in diſtreſs. Never indulge this, eſpecially where your friends or acquaintances are concerned. Let the days of their misfortunes, when the world forgets or avoids them, be the ſeaſon for you to exerciſe your humanity and friendſhip. The ſight of human miſery ſoftens the heart, and makes it better; it checks the pride of health and proſperity, and the diſtreſs it occaſions is amply compenſated by the conſciouſneſs of doing your duty, and by the ſecret endearments which nature has annexed to all our ſympathetic ſorrows.

Women are greatly deceived, when they think they recommend themſelves to our ſex by their indifference about religion. Even thoſe men who are themſelves unbelievers diſlike infidelity in you. Every man who knows human nature, connects a religious taſte in your ſex with ſoftneſs and ſenſibility of heart; at leaſt we always conſider the want of it as a proof of that hard and maſculine ſpirit, which of all your faults we diſlike the moſt. Beſides, men conſider your religion

religion as one of their principal ſecurities for that female virtue in which they are moſt intereſted. If a gentleman pretends an attachment to any of you, and endeavours to ſhake your religious principles, be aſſured he is either a fool, or has deſigns on you which he dares not openly avow.

You will probably wonder at my having educated you in a church different from my own. The reaſon was plainly this: I looked on the differences between our churches to be of no real importance, and that a preference of one to the other was a mere matter of taſte. Your mother was educated in the church of England, and had an attachment to it, and I had a prejudice in favour of every thing ſhe liked. It never was her deſire that you ſhould be baptized by a clergyman of the church of England, or be educated in that church. On the contrary, the delicacy of her regard to the ſmalleſt circumſtance that could affect me in the eye of the world, made her anxiouſly inſiſt it might be otherwiſe. But I could not yield to her in that kind of generoſity.—When I loſt her, I became ſtill more determined to educate you in that church, as I feel a ſecret pleaſure in doing every thing that appears to me to expreſs my affection and veneration for her memory.—I draw but a very faint and imperfect picture of what

your mother was, while I endeavour to point out what you ſhould be *.

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* The reader will remember, that ſuch obſervations as reſpect equally both the ſexes are all along as much as poſſible avoided.

CON-

CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOUR.

ONE of the chief beauties in a female character is that modeſt reſerve, that retiring delicacy, which avoids the public eye, and is diſconcerted even at the gaze of admiration.—I do not wiſh you to be inſenſible to applauſe. If you were, you muſt become, if not worſe, at leaſt leſs amiable women. But you may be dazzled by that admiration, which yet rejoices your hearts.

When a girl ceaſes to bluſh, ſhe has loſt the moſt powerful charm of beauty. That extreme ſenſibility which it indicates, may be a weakneſs and incumbrance in our ſex, as I have too often felt; but in yours it is peculiarly engaging. Pedants, who think themſelves philoſophers, aſk why a woman ſhould bluſh when ſhe is conſcious of no crime. It is a ſufficient anſwer, that Nature has made you to bluſh when you are guilty of no fault, and has forced us to love you becauſe you do ſo.——Bluſhing is ſo far from being neceſſarily an attendant on guilt, that it is the uſual companion of innocence.

This modeſty, which I think ſo eſſential in your ſex, will naturally diſpoſe you to be rather ſilent in company, eſpecially in a large one.——People of ſenſe and diſcernment will never miſ-

take

take ſuch ſilence for dulneſs. One may take a ſhare in converſation without uttering a ſyllable. The expreſſion in the countenance ſhews it, and this never eſcapes an obſerving eye.

I ſhould be glad that you had an eaſy dignity in your behaviour at public places, but not that confident eaſe, that unabaſhed countenance, which ſeems to ſet the company at defiance.—If, while a gentleman is ſpeaking to you, one of ſuperior rank addreſſes you, do not let your eager attention and viſible preference betray the flutter of your heart. Let your pride on this occaſion preſerve you from that meanneſs into which your vanity would ſink you. Conſider that you expoſe yourſelves to the ridicule of the company, and affront one gentleman, only to ſwell the triumph of another, who perhaps thinks he does you honour in ſpeaking to you.

Converſe with men even of the firſt rank with that dignified modeſty, which may prevent the approach of the moſt diſtant familiarity, and conſequently prevent them from feeling themſelves your ſuperiors.

Wit is the moſt dangerous talent you can poſſeſs. It muſt be guarded with great diſcretion and good-nature, otherwiſe it will create you many enemies. Wit is perfectly conſiſtent with ſoftneſs and delicacy; yet they are ſeldom

dom found united. Wit is ſo flattering to vanity, that they who poſſeſs it become intoxicated, and loſe all ſelf-command.

Humour is a different quality. It will make your company much ſolicited; but be cautious how you indulge it.——It is often a great enemy to delicacy, and a ſtill greater one to dignity of character. It may ſometimes gain you applauſe, but will never procure you reſpect.

Be even cautious in diſplaying your good ſenſe. It will be thought you aſſume a ſuperiority over the reſt of the company.——But if you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound ſecret, eſpecially from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts, and a cultivated underſtanding.

A man of real genius and candour is far ſuperior to this meanneſs. But ſuch a one will ſeldom fall in your way; and if by accident he ſhould, do not be anxious to ſhew the full extent of your knowledge. If he has any opportunities of ſeeing you, he will ſoon diſcover it himſelf; and if you have any advantages of perſon or manner, and keep your own ſecret, he will probably give you credit for a great deal more than you poſſeſs.—The great art of pleaſing in converſation

verſation conſiſts in making the company pleaſed with themſelves. You will more readily hear than talk yourſelves into their good graces.

Beware of detraction, eſpecially where your own ſex are concerned. You are generally accuſed of being particularly addicted to this vice. —I think unjuſtly.—Men are fully as guilty of it when their intereſts interfere.—As your intereſts more frequently claſh, and as your feelings are quicker than ours, your temptations to it are more frequent. For this reaſon, be particularly tender of the reputation of your own ſex, eſpecially when they happen to rival you in our regards. We look on this as the ſtrongeſt proof of dignity and true greatneſs of mind.

Shew a compaſſionate ſympathy to unfortunate women, eſpecially to thoſe who are rendered ſo by the villany of men. Indulge a ſecret pleaſure, I may ſay pride, in being the friends and refuge of the unhappy, but without the vanity of ſhewing it.

Conſider every ſpecies of indelicacy in converſation, as ſhameful in itſelf, and as highly diſguſting to us. All double entendre is of this ſort.—The diſſoluteneſs of mens education allows them to be diverted with a kind of wit, which yet they have delicacy enough to be ſhocked at, when it comes from your mouths,

or

or even when you hear it without pain and contempt.—Virgin purity is of that delicate nature, that it cannot hear certain things without contamination. It is always in your power to avoid theſe. No man, but a brute or a fool, will inſult a woman with converſation which he ſees gives her pain; nor will he dare to do it, if ſhe reſent the injury with a becoming ſpirit.—— There is a dignity in conſcious Virtue which is able to awe the moſt ſhameleſs and abandoned of men.

You will be reproached perhaps with prudery. By prudery is uſually meant an affectation of delicacy. Now I do not wiſh you to affect delicacy; I wiſh you to poſſeſs it. At any rate, it is better to run the riſk of being thought ridiculous than diſguſting.

The men will complain of your reſerve. They will aſſure you that a franker behaviour would make you more amiable. But truſt me, they are not ſincere when they tell you ſo.—I acknowledge, that on ſome occaſions it might render you more agreeable as companions, but it would make you leſs amiable as women: An important diſtinction, which many of your ſex are not aware of.—After all, I wiſh you to have great eaſe and openneſs in your converſation. I only point out ſome conſiderations which ought to regulate your behaviour in that reſpect.

Have a ſecret regard to truth. Lying is a mean and deſpicable vice.—I have known ſome women of excellent parts, who were ſo much addicted to it, that they could not be truſted in the relation of any ſtory, eſpecially if it contained any thing of the marvellous, or if they themſelves were the heroines of the tale. This weakneſs did not proceed from a bad heart, but was merely the effect of vanity, or an unbridled imagination.—I do not mean to cenſure that lively embelliſhment of a humorous ſtory, which is only intended to promote innocent mirth.

There is a certain gentleneſs of ſpirit and manners extremely engaging in your ſex; not that indiſcriminate attention, that unmeaning ſimper, which ſmiles on all alike. This ariſes, either from an affectation of ſoftneſs, or from perfect inſipidity.

There is a ſpecies of refinement in luxury, juſt beginning to prevail among the gentlemen of this country, to which our ladies are yet as great ſtrangers as any women upon earth; I hope, for the honour of the ſex, they may ever continue ſo: I mean, the luxury of eating. It is a deſpicable ſelfiſh vice in men, but in your ſex it is beyond expreſſion indelicate and diſguſting.

Every

Every one who remembers a few years back, is ſenſible of a very ſtriking change in the attention and reſpect formerly paid by the gentlemen to the ladies. Their drawing-rooms are deſerted; and after dinner and ſupper, the gentlemen are impatient till they retire. How they came to loſe this reſpect, which nature and politeneſs ſo well intitle them to, I ſhall not here particularly inquire. The revolutions of manners in any country depend on cauſes very various and complicated. I ſhall only obſerve, that the behaviour of the ladies in the laſt age was very reſerved and ſtately. It would now be reckoned ridiculouſly ſtiff and formal. Whatever it was, it had certainly the effect of making them more reſpected.

A fine woman, like other fine things in nature, has her proper point of view, from which ſhe may be ſeen to moſt advantage. To fix this point requires great judgment, and an intimate knowledge of the human heart. By the preſent mode of female manners, the ladies ſeem to expect that they ſhall regain their aſcendancy over us, by the fulleſt diſplay of their perſonal charms, by being always in our eye at public places, by converſing with us with the ſame unreſerved freedom as we do with one another; in ſhort, by reſembling us as nearly as they poſſibly can. —But a little time and experience will ſhew the folly of this expectation and conduct.

The power of a fine woman over the hearts of men, of men of the fineſt parts, is even beyond what ſhe conceives. They are ſenſible of the pleaſing illuſion, but they cannot, nor do they wiſh to diſſolve it. But if ſhe is determined to diſpel the charm, it certainly is in her power: ſhe may ſoon reduce the angel to a very ordinary girl.

There is a native dignity, an ingenuous modeſty to be expected in your ſex, which is your natural protection from the familiarities of the men, and which you ſhould feel previous to the reflection that it is your intereſt to keep yourſelves ſacred from all perſonal freedoms. The many nameleſs charms and endearments of beauty ſhould be reſerved to bleſs the arms of the happy man to whom you give your heart, but who, if he has the leaſt delicacy, will deſpiſe them, if he knows that they have been proſtituted to fifty men before him.—The ſentiment, that a woman may allow all innocent freedoms, provided her virtue is ſecure, is both groſsly indelicate and dangerous, and has proved fatal to many of your ſex.

Let me now recommend to your attention that elegance, which is not ſo much a quality itſelf, as the high poliſh of every other. It is what diffuſes an ineffable grace over every look, every motion, every ſentence you utter. It gives

gives that charm to beauty without which it generally fails to pleaſe. It is partly a perſonal quality, in which reſpect it is the gift of nature; but I ſpeak of it principally as a quality of the mind. In a word, it is the perfection of taſte in life and manners;—every virtue and every excellence, in their moſt graceful and amiable forms.

You may perhaps think that I want to throw every ſpark of nature out of your compoſition, and to make you entirely artificial. Far from it. I wiſh you to poſſeſs the moſt perfect ſimplicity of heart and manners. I think you may poſſeſs dignity without pride, affability without meanneſs, and ſimple elegance without affectation. Milton had my idea, when he ſays of Eve,

Grace was in all her ſteps, Heaven in her eye,
In every geſture dignity and love.

AMUSEMENTS.

EVERY period of life has amuſements which are natural and proper to it. You may indulge the variety of your taſtes in theſe, while you keep within the bounds of that propriety which is ſuitable to your ſex.

Some amuſements are conducive to health, as various kinds of exerciſe: ſome are connected with qualities really uſeful, as different kinds of womens work, and all the domeſtic concerns of a family: ſome are elegant accompliſhments, as dreſs, dancing, muſic, and drawing. Such books as improve your underſtanding, enlarge your knowledge, and cultivate your taſte, may be conſidered in a higher point of view than mere amuſements. There are a variety of others, which are neither uſeful nor ornamental, ſuch as play of different kinds.

I would particularly recommend to you thoſe exerciſes that oblige you to be much abroad in the open air, ſuch as walking, and riding on horſe-back. This will give vigour to your conſtitutions, and a bloom to your complexions. If you accuſtom yourſelves to go abroad always in chairs and carriages, you will ſoon become ſo enervated, as to be unable to go out of doors without them. They are like moſt articles of luxury,

luxury, uſeful and agreeable when judiciouſly uſed; but when made habitual, they become both inſipid and pernicious.

An attention to your health is a duty you owe to yourſelves and to your friends. Bad health ſeldom fails to have an influence on the ſpirits and temper. The fineſt geniuſes, the moſt delicate minds, have very frequently a correſpondent delicacy of bodily conſtitution, which they are too apt to neglect. Their luxury lies in reading and late hours, equal enemies to health and beauty.

But though good health be one of the greateſt bleſſings of life, never make a boaſt of it, but enjoy it in grateful ſilence. We ſo naturally aſſociate the idea of female ſoftneſs and delicacy with a correſpondent delicacy of conſtitution, that when a woman ſpeaks of her great ſtrength, her extraordinary appetite, her ability to bear exceſſive fatigue, we recoil at the deſcription in a way ſhe is little aware of.

The intention of your being taught needle-work, knitting, and ſuch like, is not on account of the intrinſic value of all you can do with your hands, which is trifling, but to enable you to judge more perfectly of that kind of work, and to direct the execution of it in others. Another principal end is to enable you to fill up, in a tolerably agreeable way, ſome of the many

ſolitary hours you muſt neceſſarily paſs at home. —It is a great article in the happineſs of life, to have your pleaſures as independent of others as poſſible. By continually gadding abroad in ſearch of amuſement, you loſe the reſpect of all your acquaintances, whom you oppreſs with thoſe viſits, which, by a more diſcreet management, might have been courted.

The domeſtic oeconomy of a family is entirely a woman's province, and furniſhes a variety of ſubjects for the exertion both of good ſenſe and good taſte. If you ever come to have the charge of a family, it ought to engage much of your time and attention; nor can you be excuſed from this by any extent of fortune, though with a narrow one the ruin that follows the neglect of it may be more immediate.

I am at the greateſt loſs what to adviſe you in regard to books. There is no impropriety in your reading hiſtory, or cultivating any art or ſcience to which genius or accident leads you. The whole volume of Nature lies open to your eye, and furniſhes an infinite variety of entertainment. If I was ſure that nature had given you ſuch ſtrong principles of taſte and ſentiment as would remain with you, and influence your future conduct, with the utmoſt pleaſure would I endeavour to direct your reading in ſuch a way as might form that taſte to the utmoſt perfection of truth and elegance. "But when I reflect how

how eaſy it is to warm a girl's imagination, and how difficult deeply and permanently to affect her heart; how readily ſhe enters into every refinement of ſentiment, and how eaſily ſhe can ſacrifice them to vanity or convenience;" I think I may very probably do you an injury by artificially creating a taſte, which, if Nature never gave it you, would only ſerve to embarraſs your future conduct.—I do not want to *make* you any thing: I want to know what Nature has made you, and to perfect you on her plan. I do not wiſh you to have ſentiments that might perplex you: I wiſh you to have ſentiments that may uniformly and ſteadily guide you, and ſuch as your hearts ſo thoroughly approve, that you would not forego them for any conſideration this world could offer.

Dreſs is an important article in female life. The love of dreſs is natural to you, and therefore it is proper and reaſonable. Good ſenſe will regulate your expence in it, and good taſte will direct you to dreſs in ſuch a way as to conceal any blemiſhes, and ſet off your beauties, if you have any, to the greateſt advantage. But much delicacy and judgment are required in the application of this rule. A fine woman ſhews her charms to moſt advantage, when ſhe ſeems moſt to conceal them. The fineſt boſom in nature is not ſo fine as what imagination forms.

The

The moſt perfect elegance of dreſs appears always the moſt eaſy, and the leaſt ſtudied.

Do not confine your attention to dreſs to your public appearances. Accuſtom yourſelves to an habitual neatneſs, ſo that in the moſt careleſs undreſs, in your moſt unguarded hours, you may have no reaſon to be aſhamed of your appearance. — You will not eaſily believe how much we conſider your dreſs as expreſſive of your characters. Vanity, levity, ſlovenlineſs, folly, appear through it. An elegant ſimplicity is an equal proof of taſte and delicacy.

In dancing, the principal points you are to attend to are eaſe and grace. I would have you to dance with ſpirit; but never allow yourſelves to be ſo far tranſported with mirth, as to forget the delicacy of your ſex.—Many a girl dancing in the gaiety and innocence of her heart, is thought to diſcover a ſpirit ſhe little dreams of.

I know no entertainment that gives ſuch pleaſure to any perſon of ſentiment or humour, as the theatre.— But I am ſorry to ſay, there are few Engliſh comedies a lady can ſee, without a ſhock to delicacy. You will not readily ſuſpect the comments gentlemen make on your behaviour on ſuch occaſions. Men are often beſt acquainted with the moſt worthleſs of your ſex, and

and from them too readily form their judgment of the reſt. A virtuous girl often hears very indelicate things with a countenance no wiſe embarraſſed, becauſe in truth ſhe does not underſtand them. Yet this is, moſt ungenerouſly, aſcribed to that command of features, and that ready preſence of mind, which you are thought to poſſeſs in a degree far beyond us; or, by ſtill more malignant obſervers, it is aſcribed to hardened effrontery.

Sometimes a girl laughs with all the ſimplicity of unſuſpecting innocence, for no other reaſon but being infected with other peoples laughing: ſhe is then believed to know more than ſhe ſhould do.—If ſhe does happen to underſtand an improper thing, ſhe ſuffers a very complicated diſtreſs: ſhe feels her modeſty hurt in the moſt ſenſible manner, and at the ſame time is aſhamed of appearing conſcious of the injury. The only way to avoid theſe inconveniencies, is never to go to a play that is particularly offenſive to delicacy.—Tragedy ſubjects you to no ſuch diſtreſs.—Its ſorrows will ſoften and ennoble your hearts.

I need ſay little about gaming, the ladies in this country being as yet almoſt ſtrangers to it. —It is a ruinous and incurable vice; and as it leads to all the ſelfiſh and turbulent paſſions, is peculiarly odious in your ſex. I have no objection

jection to your playing a little at any kind of game, as a variety in your amuſements, provided that what you can poſſibly loſe is ſuch a trifle as can neither intereſt you, nor hurt you.

In this, as well as in all important points of conduct, ſhew a determined reſolution and ſteadineſs. This is not in the leaſt inconſiſtent with that ſoftneſs and gentleneſs ſo amiable in your ſex. On the contrary, it gives that ſpirit to a mild and ſweet diſpoſition, without which it is apt to degenerate into inſipidity. It makes you reſpectable in your own eyes, and dignifies you in ours.

FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, MARRIAGE.

THE luxury and diſſipation that prevails in genteel life, as it corrupts the heart in many reſpects, ſo it renders it incapable of warm, ſincere, and ſteady friendſhip. A happy choice of friends will be of the utmoſt conſequence to you, as they may aſſiſt you by their advice and good offices. But the immediate gratification which friendſhip affords to a warm, open and ingenuous heart, is of itſelf a ſufficient motive to court it.

In the choice of your friends, have your principal regard to goodneſs of heart and fidelity. If they alſo poſſeſs taſte and genius, that will ſtill make them more agreeable and uſeful companions. You have particular reaſon to place confidence in thoſe who have ſhewn affection for you in your early days, when you were incapable of making them any return. This is an obligation for which you cannot be too grateful—— When you read this, you will naturally think of your mother's friend, to whom you owe ſo much.

If you have the good fortune to meet with any who deſerve the name of friends, unboſom yourſelf to them with the moſt unſuſpicious confidence.

dence. It is one of the world's maxims, never to truſt any perſon with a ſecret, the diſcovery of which could give you any pain ; but it is the maxim of a little mind and a cold heart, unleſs where it is the effect of frequent diſappointments and bad uſage. An open temper, if reſtrained but by tolerable prudence, will make you, on the whole, much happier than a reſerved ſuſpicious one, although you may ſometimes ſuffer by it. Coldneſs and diſtruſt are but the two certain conſequences of age and experience ; but they are unpleaſant feelings, and need not be anticipated before their time.

But however open you may be in talking of your own affairs, never diſcloſe the ſecrets of one friend to another. Theſe are ſacred depoſites, which do not belong to you, nor have you any right to make uſe of them.

There is another caſe, in which I ſuſpect it is proper to be ſecret, not ſo much from motives of prudence, as delicacy ; I mean in love matters. Though a woman has no reaſon to be aſhamed of an attachment to a man of merit, yet nature, whoſe authority is ſuperior to philoſophy, has annexed a ſenſe of ſhame to it. It is even long before a woman of delicacy dares avow to her own heart that ſhe loves ; and when all the ſubterfuges of ingenuity to conceal it from

from herſelf fail, ſhe feels a violence done both to her pride and to her modeſty. This, I ſhould imagine, muſt always be the caſe where ſhe is not ſure of a return to her attachment.

In ſuch a ſituation, to lay the heart open to any perſon whatever, does not appear to me conſiſtent with the perfection of female delicacy. But perhaps I am in the wrong.—At the ſame time I muſt tell you, that, in point of prudence, it concerns you to attend well to the conſequences of ſuch a diſcovery. Theſe ſecrets, however important in your own eſtimation, may appear very trifling to your friend, who poſſibly will not enter into your feelings, but may rather conſider them as a ſubject of pleaſantry. For this reaſon, love-ſecrets are of all others the worſt kept. But the conſequences to you may be very ſerious, as no man of ſpirit and delicacy ever valued a heart much hackneyed in the ways of love.

If, therefore, you muſt have a friend to pour out your heart to, be ſure of her honour and ſecrecy. Let her not be a married woman, eſpecially if ſhe lives happily with her huſband. There are certain unguarded moments, in which ſuch a woman, though the beſt and worthieſt of her ſex, may let hints eſcape, which at other times, or to any other perſon than her huſband,

ſhe would be incapable of; nor will a huſband in this caſe feel himſelf under the ſame obligation of ſecrecy and honour, as if you had put your confidence originally in himſelf, eſpecially on a ſubject which the world is apt to treat ſo lightly.

If all other circumſtances are equal, there are obvious advantages in your making friends of one another. The ties of blood, and your being ſo much united in one common intereſt, form an additional bond of union to your friendſhip. If your brothers ſhould have the good fortune to have hearts ſuſceptible of friendſhip, to poſſeſs truth, honour, ſenſe, and delicacy of ſentiment, they are the fitteſt and moſt unexceptionable confidants. By placing confidence in them, you will receive every advantage which you could hope for from the friendſhip of men, without any of the inconveniencies that attend ſuch connexions with our ſex.

Beware of making confidants of your ſervants. Dignity not properly underſtood very readily degenerates into pride, which enters into no friendſhips, becauſe it cannot bear an equal, and is ſo fond of flattery as to graſp at it even from ſervants and dependants. The moſt intimate confidants, therefore, of proud people are valets-de-chamber and waiting-women. Shew the utmoſt humanity to your ſervants; make their

their ſituation as comfortable to them as is poſſible: but if you make them your confidants, you ſpoil them, and debaſe yourſelves.

Never allow any perſon, under the pretended ſanction of friendſhip, to be ſo familiar as to loſe a proper reſpect for you. Never allow them to teaze you on any ſubject that is diſagreeable, or where you have once taken your reſolution. Many will tell you, that this reſerve is inconſiſtent with the freedom which friendſhip allows. But a certain reſpect is as neceſſary in friendſhip as in love. Without it, you may be liked as a child, but you will never be beloved as an equal.

The temper and diſpoſitions of the heart in your ſex make you enter more readily and warmly into friendſhips than men. Your natural propenſity to it is ſo ſtrong, that you often run into intimacies which you ſoon have ſufficient cauſe to repent of; and this makes your friendſhips ſo very fluctuating.

Another great obſtacle to the ſincerity as well as ſteadineſs of your friendſhips, is the great claſhing of your intereſts in the purſuits of love, ambition, or vanity. For theſe reaſons, it ſhould appear at firſt view more eligible for you to contract your friendſhips with the men. Among other obvious advantages of an eaſy intercourſe between the two ſexes, it occaſions an

emulation and exertion in each to excel and be agreeable: hence their reſpective excellencies are mutually communicated and blended. As their intereſts in no degree interfere, there can be no foundation for jealouſy or ſuſpicion of rivalſhip. The friendſhip of a man for a woman is always blended with a tenderneſs, which he never feels for one of his own ſex, even where love is in no degree concerned. Beſides, we are conſcious of a natural title you have to our protection and good offices, and therefore we feel an additional obligation of honour to ſerve you, and to obſerve an inviolable ſecrecy, whenever you confide in us.

But apply theſe obſervations with great caution. Thouſands of women of the beſt hearts and fineſt parts have been ruined by men who approached them under the ſpecious name of friendſhip. But ſuppoſing a man to have the moſt undoubted honour, yet his friendſhip to a woman is ſo near a-kin to love, that if ſhe be very agreeable in her perſon, ſhe will probably very ſoon find a lover, where ſhe only wiſhed to meet a friend.—Let me here, however, warn you againſt that weakneſs ſo common among vain women, the imagination that every man who takes particular notice of you is a lover. Nothing can expoſe you more to ridicule, than the taking up a man on the ſuſpicion of being your lover, who perhaps never once thought

thought of you in that view, and giving yourſelves thoſe airs ſo common among ſilly women on ſuch occaſions.

There is a kind of unmeaning gallantry much practiſed by ſome men, which, if you have any diſcernment, you will find really very harmleſs. Men of this ſort will attend you to public places, and be uſeful to you by a number of little obſervances, which thoſe of a ſuperior claſs do not ſo well underſtand, or have not leiſure to regard, or perhaps are too proud to ſubmit to. Look on the compliments of ſuch men as words of courſe, which they repeat to every agreeable woman of their acquaintance. There is a familiarity they are apt to aſſume, which a proper dignity in your behaviour will be eaſily able to check.

There is a different ſpecies of men whom you may like as agreeable companions, men of worth, taſte and genius, whoſe converſation, in ſome reſpects, may be ſuperior to what you generally meet with among your own ſex. It will be fooliſh in you to deprive yourſelves of an uſeful and agreeable acquaintance, merely becauſe idle people ſay he is your lover. Such a man may like your company, without having any deſign on your perſon.

People whoſe ſentiments, and particularly whoſe taſtes correſpond, naturally like to aſ-

ſociate together, altho' neither of them have the moſt diſtant view of any further connection. But as this ſimilarity of minds often gives riſe to a more tender attachment than friendſhip, it will be prudent to keep a watchful eye over yourſelves, leſt your hearts become too far engaged before you are aware of it. At the ſame time, I do not think that your ſex, at leaſt in this part of the world, have much of that ſenſibility which diſpoſes to ſuch attachments. What is commonly called love among you is rather gratitude, and a partiality to the man who prefers you to the reſt of your ſex; and ſuch a man you often marry, with little of either perſonal eſteem or affection. Indeed, without an unuſual ſhare of natural ſenſibility, and very peculiar good fortune, a woman in this country has very little probability of marrying for love.

It is a maxim laid down among you, and a very prudent one it is, That love is not to begin on your part, but is entirely to be the conſequence of our attachment to you. Now, ſuppoſing a woman to have ſenſe and taſte, ſhe will not find many men to whom ſhe can poſſibly be ſuppoſed to bear any conſiderable ſhare of eſteem. Among theſe few, it is a very great chance if any of them diſtinguiſhes her particularly. Love, at leaſt with us, is exceedingly

ly capricious, and will not always fix where reaſon ſays it ſhould. But ſuppoſing one of them ſhould become particularly attached to her, it is ſtill extremely improbable that he ſhould be the man in the world her heart moſt approved of.

As, therefore, Nature has not given you that unlimited range in your choice which we enjoy, ſhe has wiſely and benevolently aſſigned to you a greater flexibility of taſte on this ſubject. Some agreeable qualities recommend a gentleman to your common good liking and friendſhip. In the courſe of his acquaintance, he contracts an attachment to you. When you perceive it, it excites your gratitude; this gratitude riſes into a preference, and this preference perhaps at laſt advances to ſome degree of attachment, eſpecially if it meets with croſſes and difficulties; for theſe, and a ſtate of ſuſpenſe, are very great incitements to attachment, and are the food of love in both ſexes. If attachment was not excited in your ſex in this manner, there is not one of a million of you that could ever marry with any degree of love.

A man of taſte and delicacy marries a woman becauſe he loves her more than any other. A woman of equal taſte and delicacy marries him becauſe ſhe eſteems him, and becauſe he gives her that preference. But if a man unfortunately

becomes

becomes attached to a woman whoſe heart is ſecretly pre-engaged, his attachment, inſtead of obtaining a ſuitable return, is particularly offenſive; and if he perſiſts to teaze her, he makes himſelf equally the object of her ſcorn and averſion.

The effects of love among men are diverſified by their different tempers. An artful man may counterfeit every one of them ſo as eaſily to impoſe on a young girl of an open, generous, and feeling heart, if ſhe is not extremely on her guard. The fineſt parts in ſuch a girl may not always prove ſufficient for her ſecurity. The dark and crooked paths of cunning are unſearchable, and inconceivable to an honourable and elevated mind.

The following, I apprehend, are the moſt genuine effects of an honourable paſſion among the men, and the moſt difficult to counterfeit. A man of delicacy often betrays his paſſion by his too great anxiety to conceal it, eſpecially if he has little hopes of ſucceſs. True love, in all its ſtages, ſeeks concealment, and never expects ſucceſs. It renders a man not only reſpectful, but timid to the higheſt degree in his behaviour to the woman he loves. To conceal the awe he ſtands in of her, he may ſometimes affect pleaſantry, but it ſits aukwardly on him, and he quickly relapſes into ſerioufneſs, if not into dulneſs. He magnifies all her real perfec-

tions

tions in his imagination, and is either blind to her failings, or converts them into beauties. Like a perſon conſcious of guilt, he is jealous that every eye obſerves him; and to avoid this, he ſhuns all the little obſervances of common gallantry.

His heart and his character will be improved in every reſpect by his attachment. His manners will become more gentle, and his converſation more agreeable; but diffidence and embarraſſment will always make him appear to diſadvantage in the company of his miſtreſs. If the faſcination continue long, it will totally depreſs his ſpirit, and extinguiſh every active, vigorous, and manly principle of his mind. You will find this ſubject beautifully and pathetically painted in Thomſon's Spring.

When you obſerve in a gentleman's behaviour theſe marks which I have deſcribed above, reflect ſeriouſly what you are to do. If his attachment is agreeable to you, I leave you to do as nature, good ſenſe, and delicacy ſhall direct you. If you love him, let me adviſe you never to diſcover to him the full extent of your love, no not although you marry him. That ſufficiently ſhews your preference, which is all he is intitled to know. If he has delicacy, he will aſk for no ſtronger proof of your affection

tion for your ſake; if he has ſenſe, he will not aſk it for his own. This is an unpleaſant truth, but it is my duty to let you know it. Violent love cannot ſubſiſt, at leaſt cannot be expreſſed, for any time together, on both ſides; otherwiſe the certain conſequence, however concealed, is ſatiety and diſguſt. Nature in this caſe has laid the reſerve on you.

If you ſee evident proofs of a gentleman's attachment, and are determined to ſhut your heart againſt him, as you ever hope to be uſed with generoſity by the perſon who ſhall engage your own heart, treat him honourably and humanely. Do not let him linger in a miſerable ſuſpenſe, but be anxious to let him know your ſentiments with regard to him.

However peoples hearts may deceive them, there is ſcarcely a perſon that can love for any time without at leaſt ſome diſtant hope of ſucceſs. If you really wiſh to undeceive a lover, you may do it in a variety of ways. There is a certain ſpecies of eaſy familiarity in your behaviour, which may ſatisfy him, if he has any diſcernment left, that he has nothing to hope for. But perhaps your particular temper may not admit of this.—You may eaſily ſhew that you want to avoid his company; but if he is

a man

a man whoſe friendſhip you wiſh to preſerve, you may not chuſe this method, becauſe then you loſe him in every capacity.--You may get a common friend to explain matters to him, or fall on many other devices, if you are ſeriouſly anxious to put him out of ſuſpenſe.

But if you are reſolved againſt every ſuch method, at leaſt do not ſhun opportunities of letting him explain himſelf. If you do this, you act barbarouſly and unjuſtly. If he brings you to an explanation, give him a polite, but reſolute and deciſive anſwer. In whatever way you convey your ſentiments to him, if he is a man of ſpirit and delicacy, he will give you no further trouble, nor apply to your friends for their interceſſion. This laſt is a method of courtſhip which every man of ſpirit will diſdain.—He will never whine nor ſue for your pity. That would mortify him almoſt as much as your ſcorn. In ſhort, you may poſſibly break ſuch a heart, but you can never bend it.—Great pride always accompanies delicacy, however concealed under the appearance of the utmoſt gentleneſs and modeſty, and is the paſſion of all others the moſt difficult to conquer.

There is a caſe where a woman may coquette juſtifiably to the utmoſt verge which her conſcience will allow. It is where a gentleman purpoſely

purpoſely declines to make his addreſſes, till ſuch time as he thinks himſelf perfectly ſure of her conſent. This at bottom is intended to force a woman to give up the undoubted privilege of her ſex, the privilege of her refuſing; it is intended to force her to explain herſelf, in effect, before the gentleman deigns to do it, and by this means to oblige her to violate the modeſty and delicacy of her ſex, and to invert the cleareſt order of nature. All this ſacrifice is propoſed to be made merely to gratify a moſt deſpicable vanity in a man who would degrade the very woman whom he wiſhes to make his wife.

It is of great importance to diſtinguiſh, whether a gentleman who has the appearance of being your lover delays to ſpeak explicitly, from the motive I have mentioned, or from a diffidence inſeparable from true attachment. In the one caſe, you can ſcarcely uſe him too ill: in the other, you ought to uſe him with great kindneſs: and the greateſt kindneſs you can ſhew him, if you are determined not to liſten to his addreſſes, is to let him know it as ſoon as poſſible.

I know the many excuſes with which women endeavour to juſtify themſelves to the world, and to their own conſciences, when they act otherwiſe.

wiſe. Sometimes they plead ignorance, or at leaſt uncertainty, of the gentleman's real ſentiments. That may ſometimes be the caſe. Sometimes they plead the decorums of their ſex, which enjoins an equal behaviour to all men, and forbids them to conſider any man as a lover till he has directly told them ſo.—Perhaps few women carry their ideas of female delicacy and decorum ſo far as I do. But I muſt ſay, you are not intitled to plead the obligation of theſe virtues, in oppoſition to the ſuperior ones of gratitude, juſtice, and humanity. The man is intitled to all theſe, who prefers you to the reſt of your ſex, and perhaps whoſe greateſt weakneſs is this very preference.—The truth of the matter is, vanity, and the love of admiration, is ſo prevailing a paſſion among you, that you may be conſidered to make a very great ſacrifice whenever you give up a lover, till every art of coquetry fails to keep him, or till he forces you to an explanation. You can be fond of the love, when you are indifferent to, or even when you deſpiſe the lover.

But the deepeſt and moſt artful coquetry is employed by women of ſuperior taſte and ſenſe, to engage and fix the heart of a man whom the world and whom they themſelves eſteem, although they are firmly determined never to marry him. But his converſation amuſes them, and his attachment is the higheſt gratification to their vanity; nay, they can ſometimes be gra-

tified with the utter ruin of his fortune, fame, and happineſs.—God forbid I ſhould ever think ſo of all your ſex. I know many of them have principles, have generoſity and dignity of ſoul that elevates them above the worthleſs vanity I have been ſpeaking of.

Such a woman, I am perſuaded, may always convert a lover, if ſhe cannot give him her affections, into a warm and ſteady friend, provided he is a man of ſenſe, reſolution, and candour. If ſhe explains herſelf to him with a generous openneſs and freedom, he muſt feel the ſtroke as a man; but he will likewiſe bear it as a man: what he ſuffers he will ſuffer in ſilence. Every ſentiment of eſteem will remain; but love tho' it require very little food, and is eaſily ſurfeited with too much, yet it requires ſome. He will view her in the light of a married woman; and though paſſion ſubſides, yet a man of a candid and generous heart always retains a tenderneſs for a woman he has once loved, and who has uſed him well, beyond what he feels for any other of her ſex.

If he has not confided his own ſecret to any body, he has an undoubted title to aſk you not to divulge it. If a woman chuſes to truſt any of her companions with her own unfortunate attachments, ſhe may, as it is her own affair alone; but

but if ſhe has any generoſity or gratitude, ſhe will not betray a ſecret which does not belong to her.

Male coquetry is much more inexcuſable than female, as well as more pernicious; but it is rare in this country. Very few men will give themſelves the trouble to gain or retain any woman's affections, unleſs they have views on them either of an honourable or diſhonourable kind. Men employed in the purſuits of buſineſs, ambition, or pleaſure, will not give themſelves the trouble to engage a woman's affections, merely from the vanity of conqueſt, and of triumphing over the heart of an innocent and defenceleſs girl. Beſides, people never value much what is entirely in their power. A man of parts, ſentiment, and addreſs, if he lays aſide all regard to truth and humanity, may engage the hearts of fifty women at the ſame time, and may likewiſe conduct his coquetry with ſo much art, as to put it out of the power of any of them to ſpecify a ſingle expreſſion that could be ſaid to be directly expreſſive of love.

This ambiguity of behaviour, this art of keeping one in ſuſpenſe, is the great ſecret of coquetry in both ſexes. It is the more cruel in us, becauſe we can carry it what length we pleaſe, and continue it as long as we pleaſe, without your being ſo much as at liberty to com-

plain or expoſtulate; whereas we can break our chain, and force you to explain, whenever we become impatient of our ſituation.

I have inſiſted the more particularly on this ſubject of courtſhip, becauſe it may moſt readily happen to you at that early period of life when you can have little experience or knowledge of the world, when your paſſions are warm, and your judgments not arrived at ſuch full maturity as to be able to correct them.—I wiſh you to poſſeſs ſuch high principles of honour and generoſity as will render you incapable of deceiving, and at the ſame time to poſſeſs that acute diſcernment which may ſecure you againſt being deceived.

A woman, in this country, may eaſily prevent the firſt impreſſions of love, and every motive of prudence and delicacy ſhould make her guard her heart againſt them, till ſuch time as ſhe has received the moſt convincing proofs of the attachment of a man of ſuch merit, as will juſtify a reciprocal regard. Your hearts indeed may be ſhut inflexibly and permanently againſt all the merit a man can poſſeſs. That may be your misfortune, but cannot be your fault. In ſuch a ſituation, you would be equally unjuſt to yourſelf and your lover, if you gave him your hand when your heart revolted againſt him. But miſerable will be your fate, if you allow an attachment

ment to ſteal on you before you are ſure of a return; or, what is infinitely worſe, where there are wanting thoſe qualities which alone can enſure happineſs in a married ſtate.

I know nothing that renders a woman more deſpicable, than her thinking it eſſential to happineſs to be married. Beſides the groſs indelicacy of the ſentiment, it is a falſe one, as thouſands of women have experienced. But if it was true, the belief that it is ſo, and the conſequent impatience to be married, is the moſt effectual way to prevent it.

You muſt not think from this, that I do not wiſh you to marry. On the contrary, I am of opinion, that you may attain a ſuperior degree of happineſs in a married ſtate, to what you can poſſibly find in any other. I know the forlorn and unprotected ſituation of an old maid, the chagrin and peeviſhneſs which are apt to infect their tempers, and the great difficulty of making a tranſition with dignity and chearfulneſs, from the period of youth, beauty, admiration, and reſpect, into the calm, ſilent, unnoticed retreat of declining years.

I ſee ſome unmarried women of active vigorous minds, and great vivacity of ſpirits, degrading themſelves; ſometimes by entering into a diſſipated courſe of life, unſuitable to their years, and expoſing themſelves to the ridicule

of girls, who might have been their grandchildren; ſometimes by oppreſſing their acquaintances by impertinent intruſions into their private affairs; and ſometimes by being the propagators of ſcandal and defamation. All this is owing to an exuberant activity of ſpirit, which if it had found employment at home, would have rendered them reſpectable and uſeful members of ſociety.

I ſee other women in the ſame ſituation, gentle, modeſt, bleſſed with ſenſe, taſte, delicacy, and every milder feminine virtue of the heart, but of weak ſpirits, baſhful, and timid: I ſee ſuch women ſinking into obſcurity and inſignificance, and gradually loſing every elegant accompliſhment; for this evident reaſon, that they are not united to a partner who has ſenſe, and worth, and taſte, to know their value; one who is able to draw forth their concealed qualities, and ſhew them to advantage; who can give that ſupport to their feeble ſpirits which they ſtand ſo much in need of; and who, by his affection and tenderneſs, might make ſuch a woman happy in exerting every talent, and accompliſhing herſelf in every elegant art that could contribute to his amuſement.

In ſhort, I am of opinion, that a married ſtate, if entered into from proper motives of eſteem and affection, will be the happieſt for yourſelves,

yourſelves, make you moſt reſpectable in the eyes of the world, and the moſt uſeful members of ſociety. But I confeſs I am not enough of a patriot to wiſh you to marry for the good of the public. I wiſh you to marry for no other reaſon but to make yourſelves happier. When I am ſo particular in my advices about your conduct, I own my heart beats with the fond hope of making you worthy the attachment of men who will deſerve you, and be ſenſible of your merit. But Heaven forbid you ſhould ever relinquiſh the eaſe and independence of a ſingle life, to become the ſlaves of a fool or a tyrant's caprice.

As theſe have been always my ſentiments, I ſhall do you but juſtice, when I leave you in ſuch independent circumſtances as may lay you under no temptation to do from neceſſity what you would never do from choice.—This will likewiſe ſave you from that cruel mortification to a woman of ſpirit, the ſuſpicion that a gentleman thinks he does you an honour or a favour when he aſks you for his wife.

If I live till you arrive at that age when you ſhall be capable to judge for yourſelves, and do not ſtrangely alter my ſentiments, I ſhall act towards you in a very different manner from what moſt parents do. My opinion has always been, that when that period arrives, the parental authority ceaſes.

I hope

I hope I ſhall always treat you with that affection and eaſy confidence which may diſpoſe you to look on me as your friend. In that capacity alone I ſhall think myſelf intitled to give you my opinion; in the doing of which, I ſhould think myſelf highly criminal, if I did not to the utmoſt of my power endeavour to diveſt myſelf of all perſonal vanity, and all prejudices in favour of my particular taſte. If you did not chuſe to follow my advice, I ſhould not on that account ceaſe to love you as my children. Though my right to your obedience was expired, yet I ſhould think nothing could releaſe me from the ties of nature and humanity.

You may perhaps imagine, that the reſerved behaviour which I recommend to you, and your appearing ſeldom at public places, muſt cut off all opportunities of your being acquainted with gentlemen. I am very far from intending this. I adviſe you to no reſerve, but what will render you more reſpected and beloved by our ſex. I do not think public places ſuited to make people acquainted together. They can only be diſtinguiſhed there by their looks and external behaviour. But it is in private companies alone where you can expect eaſy and agreeable converſation, which I ſhould never wiſh you to decline. If you do not allow gentlemen to become acquainted with you, you can never expect to marry with attachment

attachment on either ſide.—Love is very ſeldom produced at firſt ſight; at leaſt it muſt have, in that caſe, a very unjuſtifiable foundation. True love is founded on eſteem, in a correſpondence of taſtes and ſentiments, and ſteals on the heart imperceptibly.

There is one advice I ſhall leave you, to which I beg your particular attention. Before your affections come to be in the leaſt engaged to any man, examine your tempers, your taſtes, and your hearts, very ſeverely, and ſettle in your own minds what are the requiſites to your happineſs in a married ſtate; and as it it almoſt impoſſible that you ſhould get every thing you wiſh, come to a ſteady determination what you are to conſider as eſſential, and what may be ſacrificed.

If you have hearts diſpoſed by nature for love and friendſhip, and poſſeſs thoſe feelings which enable you to enter into all the refinements and delicacies of theſe attachments, conſider well, for Heaven's ſake, and as you value your future happineſs, before you give them any indulgence. If you have the misfortune (for a very great misfortune it commonly is to your ſex) to have ſuch a temper and ſuch ſentiments deeply rooted in you, if you have ſpirit and reſolution to reſiſt the ſolicitations of vanity, the perſecution of friends (for you will have loſt the only friend that would never perſecute you) and can ſupport the

the proſpect of the many inconveniencies attending the ſtate of an old maid, which I formerly pointed out, then you may indulge yourſelves in that kind of ſentimental reading and converſation which is moſt correſpondent to your feelings.

But if you find, on a ſtrict ſelf-examination, that marriage is abſolutely eſſential to your happineſs, keep the ſecret inviolable in your own boſoms, for the reaſon I formerly mentioned; but ſhun as you would do the moſt fatal poiſon, all that ſpecies of reading and converſation which warms the imagination, which engages and ſoftens the heart, and raiſes the taſte above the level of common life. If you do otherwiſe, conſider the terrible conflict of paſſions this may afterwards raiſe in your breaſts.

If this refinement once takes deep root in your minds, and you do not obey its dictates, but marry from vulgar and mercenary views, you may never be able to eradicate it entirely, and then it will embitter all your married days. Inſtead of meeting with ſenſe, delicacy, tenderneſs, a lover, a friend, an equal companion, in a huſband, you may be tired with inſipidity and dulneſs; ſhocked with indelicacy, or mortified by indifference. You will find none to compaſſionate, or even underſtand your ſufferings; for your huſbands may not uſe you cruelly, and

and may give you as much money for your clothes, perſonal expence, and domeſtic neceſſaries, as is ſuitable to their fortunes. The world would therefore look on you as unreaſonable women, and that did not deſerve to be happy, if you were not ſo.—To avoid theſe complicated evils, if you are determined at all events to marry, I would adviſe you to make all your reading and amuſements of ſuch a kind, as do not affect the heart nor the imagination, except in the way of wit or humour.

I have no view by theſe advices to lead your taſtes; I only want to perſuade you of the neceſſity of knowing your own minds, which, though ſeemingly very eaſy, is what your ſex ſeldom attain on many important occaſions in life, but particularly on this of which I am ſpeaking. There is not a quality I more anxiouſly wiſh you to poſſeſs, than that collected deciſive ſpirit which reſt on itſelf, which enables you to ſee where your true happineſs lies, and to purſue it with the moſt determined reſolution. In matters of buſineſs, follow the advice of thoſe who know them better than yourſelves, and in whoſe integrity you can confide; but in matters of taſte, that depend on your own feelings, conſult no one friend whatever, but conſult your own hearts.

If a gentleman makes his addreſſes to you, or gives you reaſon to believe he will do ſo, before

before you allow your affections to be engaged, endeavour, in the moſt prudent and ſecret manner, to procure from your friends every neceſſary piece of information concerning him; ſuch as his character for ſenſe, his morals, his temper, fortune and family; whether it is diſtinguiſhed for parts and worth, or for folly, knavery, and loathſome hereditary diſeaſes. When your friends inform you of theſe, they have fulfilled their duty. If they go further, they have not that deference for you which a becoming dignity on your part would effectually command.

Whatever your views are in marrying, take every poſſible precaution to prevent their being diſappointed. If fortune, and the pleaſures it brings, are your aim, it is not ſufficient that the ſettlements of a jointure and childrens proviſions be ample, and properly ſecured; it is neceſſary that you ſhould enjoy the fortune during your own life. The principal ſecurity you can have for this will depend on your marrying a good-natured generous man, who deſpiſes money, and who will let you live where you can beſt enjoy that pleaſure, that pomp and parade of life for which you married him.

From what I have ſaid, you will eaſily ſee that I could never pretend to adviſe whom you

you ſhould marry; but I can with great confidence adviſe whom you ſhould not marry.

Avoid a companion that may entail any hereditary diſeaſe on your poſterity, particularly (that moſt dreadful of all human calamities) madneſs. It is the height of imprudence to run into ſuch a danger, and in my opinion, highly criminal.

Do not marry a fool; he is the moſt intractable of all animals; he is led by his paſſions and caprices, and is incapable of hearing the voice of reaſon. It may probably too hurt your vanity to have huſbands for whom you have reaſon to bluſh and tremble every time they open their lips in company. But the worſt circumſtance that attends a fool, is his conſtant jealouſy of his wife being thought to govern him. This renders it impoſſible to lead him, and he is continually doing abſurd and diſagreeable things, for no other reaſon but to ſhew he dares do them.

A rake is always a ſuſpicious huſband, becauſe he has only known the moſt worthleſs of your ſex. He likewiſe entails the worſt diſeaſes on his wife and children, if he has the misfortune to have any.

If you have a ſenſe of religion yourſelves, do not think of huſbands who have none. If they

have tolerable underſtandings, they will be glad that you have religion, for their own ſakes, and for the ſake of their families; but it will ſink you in their eſteem. If they are weak men, they will be continually teazing and ſhocking you about your principles.—If you have children, you will ſuffer the moſt bitter diſtreſs, in ſeeing all your endeavours to form their minds to virtue and piety, all your endeavours to ſecure their preſent and eternal happineſs fruſtrated, and turned into ridicule.

As I look on your choice of a huſband to be of the greateſt conſequence to your happineſs, I hope you will make it with the utmoſt circumſpection. Do not give way to a ſudden ſally of paſſion, and dignify it with the name of love.—Genuine love is not founded in caprice; it is founded in nature, on honourable views, on virtue, on ſimilarity of taſtes and ſympathy of ſouls.

If you have theſe ſentiments, you will never marry any one, when you are not in that ſituation, in point of fortune, which is neceſſary to the happineſs of either of you. What that competency may be, can only be determined by your own taſtes. It would be ungenerous in you to take advantage of a lover's attachment, to

to plunge him into diſtreſs; and if he has any honour, no perſonal gratification will ever tempt him to enter into any connection which will render you unhappy. If you have as much between you as to ſatisfy all your demands, it is ſufficient.

I ſhall conclude with endeavouring to remove a difficulty which muſt naturally occur to any woman of reflection on the ſubject of marriage. What is to become of all theſe refinements of delicacy, that dignity of manners, which checked all familiarities, and ſuſpended deſire in reſpectful and awful admiration? In anſwer to this, I ſhall only obſerve, that if motives of intereſt or vanity have had any ſhare in your reſolutions to marry, none of theſe chimerical notions will give you any pain; nay they will very quickly appear as ridiculous in your own eyes, as they probably always did in the eyes of your huſbands. They have been ſentiments which have floated in your imaginations, but have never reached your hearts. But if theſe ſentiments have been truly genuine, and if you have had the ſingular happy fate to attach thoſe who underſtand them, you have no reaſon to be afraid.

Marriage indeed, will at once diſpel the enchantment raiſed by external beauty; but the virtues and graces that firſt warmed the heart, that reſerve and delicacy which always left the lover ſomething further to wiſh, and often made him

him doubtful of your ſenſibility or attachment, may and ought ever to remain. The tumult of paſſion will neceſſarily ſubſide; but it will be ſucceeded by an endearment, that affects the heart in a more equal, more ſenſible, and tender manner.—But I muſt check myſelf, and not indulge in deſcriptions that may miſlead you, and that too ſenſibly awake the remembrance of my happier days, which, perhaps, it were better for me to forget for ever.

I have thus given you my opinion on ſome of the moſt important articles of your future life, chiefly calculated for that period when you are juſt entering the world. I have endeavoured to avoid ſome peculiarities of opinion, which, from their contradiction to the general practice of the world, I might reaſonably have ſuſpected were not ſo well founded. But in writing to you, I am afraid my heart has been too full, and too warmly intereſted, to allow me to keep this reſolution. This may have produced ſome embarraſſment, and ſome ſeeming contradictions. What I have written has been the amuſement of ſome ſolitary hours, and has ſerved to divert ſome melancholy reflections.—I am conſcious I undertook a taſk to which I was very unequal; but I have diſcharged a part of my duty.—You will at leaſt be pleaſed with it, as the laſt mark of your father's love and attention.

THE END.

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